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RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 1388
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TAGS: [KUNR](#) [AORC](#) [UNGA](#) [PREL](#) [IS](#)
SUBJECT: UN BUDGET: FIFTH COMMITTEE VOTE ON BUDGET
IMPLICATIONS OF EMERGENCY SPECIAL SESSION RESOLUTION

USUN NEW Y 00002180 001.6 OF 003

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USUN NEW Y 00002180 002.3 OF 003

mission that would be created by the draft resolution and the mission created by the Human Rights Council in its recent resolution. Australia also inquired about the possible duplication between the resolution under consideration in the General Assembly and the one adopted by the Human Rights Council. South Africa noted that he respected the right of delegations to ask questions, but that it appeared that the Committee was now caught up in politics and asked the Chairman to take action. The EU noted that they were ready to adopt the draft decision, which would not give rise to additional requirements at the present stage and allow for additional resources to be reported in the context of the performance report.

16. After a few further clarifications, the Chairman asked the Committee whether it could adopt the draft decision. Ambassador Wallace read the following explanation of vote, before the vote, which was drawn from reftel B and Ambassador Bolton's explanation of vote following the U.S. veto of the draft Security Council resolution (reftel C):

BEGIN TEXT:

Mr. Chairman,

The United States cannot support the resolution that results in the statement of program budget implications that the Committee is currently considering. The text is one-sided and unbalanced and will not advance the aspirations of the Palestinian and Israeli people. Therefore, we cannot support resources to implement this resolution.

My delegation notes that in the last day, the Third Committee of the General Assembly adopted a draft resolution that stresses the need to avoid politically motivated and biased country-specific resolutions. Yet, today, we see that the

General Assembly is considering a resolution that is politically motivated and biased towards the state of Israel.

The draft resolution before the General Assembly today answers a significant question -- that of the relevance and utility of the United Nations in the twenty-first century. We question whether pursuing these types of resolutions furthers the goals of the United Nations, as stated in the Charter, and whether it is a good use of resources.

My delegation strongly believes in the principle of consensus in this Committee. However, in light of the underlying resolution, we cannot join consensus today on this matter and therefore seek a vote on this decision.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

END TEXT.

17. Israel's representative, also speaking before the vote, said the reconvening of the tenth emergency special session of the Assembly was another example of Member States misusing and abusing the procedures of the General Assembly. He, too, supported the Fifth Committee's practice of consensus, but the draft decision before the Committee paved the way for a one-sided and biased draft to be presented to the Assembly. It ignored the fact that Palestinian actors had forced Israel to defend itself, and did not call on the Palestinian Authority to recognize Israel and curb violence. If the UN was to be useful, genuine negotiations between the parties represented the only way to settle the issue. Israel could not support expending additional financial resources for the implementation of political agendas, he said. The headline of the resolution was politically biased, he noted, even before the fact-finding mission was initiated. The draft was also talking about occupied territories, when the actions had taken place in the territory that Israel had left over a year ago, he said.

18. The Committee then proceeded to a recorded vote on the draft decision: 143 in favor, 5 opposed (U.S., Israel, Australia, Micronesia, and Palau), and 2 abstentions (Canada and Kenya). After the vote, Australia's representative, explaining his negative vote on the draft decision, said the fact-finding mission that the Assembly set up by its text would not serve any useful purpose in resolving the conflict in the Middle East. He therefore recommended that the

USUN NEW Y 00002180 003.3 OF 003

inquiry should not be funded, even if from existing resources. Australia had also voted against an inquiry that had already been set up by the Human Rights Council. Thus, if he disagreed on the inquiry in the first place, he would certainly object to two such inquiries. Finland (on behalf of the European Union) and Japan regretted that the Fifth Committee deviated from its usual practice of taking decisions by consensus.

19. COMMENT: The EU and Japan spent the day trying to lobby the U.S. (both at the Ambassadorial and delegate level) to disassociate from the consensus rather than call for a vote on the PBI. The representatives of these nations said that the PBI was simply a technical issue and that politics should not be involved, although they acknowledged that the Fifth Committee and General Assembly as a whole were in fact political bodies. Australia and Canada were sympathetic to the U.S. position, though also concerned about the precedent that would be set by another vote in the Fifth Committee, especially one called for by a major contributor.

110. COMMENT CONTINUED: Both the G77 and the EU found themselves in difficult positions during the discussions. The G77's frustration at the pace of work in the ACABQ put them on the brink of calling for Fifth Committee action without an ACABQ report, a position and precedent that would not normally be suggested by the Group. The EU wanted the costs to be absorbed and were waiting for the ACABQ to make

such a recommendation. They were therefore dependent on having an ACABQ report before the Fifth Committee. In addition, the EU argued that they did not want to set any precedents in the Fifth Committee and moving ahead without an ACABQ report would be precedent-setting, putting them in an difficult position. At the height of discussions, the Finnish EU Presidency approached Ambassadors Bolton and Wallace and asked again if the U.S. would disassociate from the consensus in the Fifth Committee. Ambassador Wallace asked whether that would cause the EU to abstain on the vote on the underlying resolution, to which the response was "no."

Ambassador Bolton stated that he heard that the EU might even co-sponsor the resolution before the Emergency Special Session. One of the Finnish delegates offhandedly remarked that they might do that, given the U.S. position in the Fifth Committee. END COMMENT.

BOLTON